

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1 (Previously presented). A process for producing resin-coated metal particles comprising: providing metal particles with surfaces coated with silica; combining the silica-coated metal particles with a polymerizable group-containing silane coupling agent so as to absorb the polymerizable group onto the surfaces of the particles; and forming a polymeric resin coating on the surfaces of the silica-coated metal particles by polymerizing a composition comprising a polymerizable monomer in the presence of the polymerizable group-containing particles.

2 (Previously presented). The process for producing the resin-coated metal particles according to claim 1, the process further comprising heating the polymeric resin on the particles at a temperature higher than the melting point of the polymeric resin and then cooling the polymeric resin so as to form a spherical product.

3 - 4 (Canceled)

5 (Previously presented). A resin-coated metal particle comprising: a metal core having a surface; a silica layer covering the surface of the core; and a resin layer covering the silica layer.

6 (Previously presented). The resin-coated metal particle according to claim 5, wherein the particle metal is selected from the group consisting of copper, silver, nickel, and silver-palladium.

7 (Previously presented). The resin-coated metal particle according to claim 6, wherein the surface of the metal core is an oxidized surface.

8 (cancelled).

9 (new). The resin-coated metal particle according to claim 7 in combination with an electrophotographic carrier.

10 (Previously presented). The resin-coated metal particle according to claim 5, wherein the surface of the metal core is an oxidized surface.

11 (Previously presented). The resin-coated metal particle according to claim 6 in combination with an electrophotographic carrier.

12 (Previously presented). The resin-coated metal particle according to claim 5 in combination with an electrophotographic carrier.

13 (Currently amended). The resin-coated metal particles according to claim 5, wherein the particles have a particle size of 0.5 to 20 μm .

14 (Previously presented). The resin-coated metal particle according to claim 13 in combination with an electrophotographic carrier.

15 (Previously presented). The resin-coated metal particles according to claim 5, wherein the surface of the resin is spherical.

16 (Previously presented). The resin-coated metal particle according to claim 15 in combination with an electrophotographic carrier.

17 (Previously presented). A process for producing a toner for forming a circuit which comprises combining the resin-coated metal particles according to claim 5 with an electrophotographic carrier.

18 (Previously presented). The process for producing a toner according to claim 17, wherein the metal of the particles are copper.

19 (Previously presented). The process for producing a toner according to claim 17, wherein the particles are spherical.

20 (Previously presented). The process for producing the resin-coated metal particles according to claim 1, wherein the particle metal is selected from the group consisting of copper, silver, nickel, and silver-palladium.

21 (Previously presented). The process for producing the resin-coated metal particles according to claim 1, wherein the composition comprising a polymerizable monomer, a polymerization initiator, and a dispersant, and wherein the process further comprises coating the surface of the metal particles with silica.

22 (Previously presented). The process for producing the resin-coated metal particles according to claim 1, further comprising oxidizing the surface of the metal particles before coating them with silica.